

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting
July 27, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was called to order by Council President Ruby Miller, opening with recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call:

Present were Council Members Ruby Miller; Fredric Rosemeyer, Judy Pyle, Pam Ream, Sue Opp, Steve Shaulis, and Gary Thomas. Also present was Mayor Scott Walker.

Also present were Interim Borough Manager Michele A. Enos; Director of Finance Brett B. Peters; Chief of Police Randy Cox; Engineering Consultant Thomas Reilly; Solicitor Jack Dirienzo; and Public Works Director George Svirsko.

Announcements

President Ruby Miller announced that two Executive Sessions were held; one at 5:30 p.m. on July 20th for personnel matters; and the other on July 27th, for personnel matters.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Mr. Thomas moved to approve the Council Meeting minutes of June 22, 2015; seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

General Public

Robert Barnes, candidate for the office of Sheriff of Somerset County, introduced himself to Borough Council. He mentioned things he would like to address as Sheriff, such as keeping the people notified of things going on, and having someone appointed to look for grants.

Opening of Bids - Public Works Garage Roof Replacement Project

TRS Roofing Inc. was the lowest responsive bidder for the Public Works Garage roof, in the amount of \$31,500.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to award the bid to the lowest responsive bidder, TRS Roofing, in the amount of \$31,500.00.

Motion Carried 6 yes -1 no
Mr. Rosemeyer voting “no”

Communications

None

Payment of Bills

Mrs. Ream moved to pay the following bills, motion seconded by Mrs. Opp:

Check Numbers 26061 to 26236 Amount: \$425,461.61

Unanimously Carried.

Policy Agenda

Old Business

(a) Salt Shed Update

Mrs. Enos asked EADS to make a determination about the structural integrity of the salt shed at the Public Works Garage. Repairs are estimated to be \$16,200, and we shared this information with the Finance Committee and Public Works Committee.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to accept the \$16,200 price.

Unanimously Carried.

New Business

(a) Winter Services Agreement North and South Franklin Avenue

Ms. Enos said we need to consider continuing the Agreement with PennDOT for winter maintenance for the 2015-16 winter season.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to continue the Agreement with PennDOT to provide winter maintenance on Franklin Avenue in the amount of \$3,895.58 from Cannel Drive to Felgar Road – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

(b) Public Works – Garage Roof Replacement

Mrs. Miller we need to consider authorizing the design and bid preparation for the remaining sections of the Public Works Garage roof.

Mrs. Enos said that while inspecting the roof we determined that certain portions of the structure needed to be repaired this year before the winter season; however the remainder of the roof structure needs to be replaced next year, so we're considering a Fall bidding since there are more competitive prices at that time.

We had three bidders for the current project, but when we bid in the Fall we may expect 9 or 10 which is traditional. A better decision would be to wait until next month. We're looking at approximately \$225,000 to replace the remainder of the roof structure after the current project has been completed. It may require more study, along with the Finance Committee, and will be a "multi-funded" project.

(c) Civil Service Testing Report Status

Ms. Enos reported that the Civil Service testing has been completed. A list of eligibles was provided to Borough Council.

Mrs. Miller said we have two eligibles, both female police officers.

Chief Cox said he and the Mayor recommend Christina Hemminger. He said they started with 10 applicants; only two of the original applicants completed the entire process successfully.

A detailed discussion ensued, including the advantage of having some additional female officers.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, seconded by Mrs. Ream, to make an offer of employment to Christina Hemminger, after the required background check.

Motion Carried, 6 yes - 1 no
Mrs. Pyle voting “no”

Chief Cox explained that this would be a “conditional offer”; Civil Service Regulations require a physical, psychological background check and a voice stress analysis examination.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to offer Michele A. Enos the position of Somerset Borough Manager

Solicitor Dirienzo made the following comments concerning the motion to offer Michele Enos the position of Borough Manager: the term is limited by statute; the Pennsylvania Borough Code states that any Borough Council is not permitted to make an offer of a borough manager position that extends beyond the next reorganization meeting of Borough Council. Therefore the most we would be able to offer at this stage, is a contract effective until Council’s Organizational Meeting in early January 2016.

Therefore the offer would be for a contract for Mrs. Enos at the negotiated annual salary rate subject to the term limitation of the statute. Benefits would be the same as in the existing management package. If she accepts, it should be in a letter to the Council President no later than the close of business on Thursday, July 30th. The position would start effective August 1, 2015.

motion seconded by Mrs. Ream

Unanimously Carried

Committee, Administration, Special Reports

Manager's Report

Ms. Enos offered the following report:

A reminder that the PSAB Fall Conference is to be held October 15th through the 18th at Seven Springs.

“National Night Out” will be held August 4th, at 6 p.m. at the Union Street Playground.

“WPSU Somerset - Our Town”, Part 2 Kickoff meeting is Wednesday August 5th 6:30 p.m., in our Public Safety Building.

We are working on obtaining “rights-of-ways acquisition for the PennDOT Route 31 Road Widening Project.

July 31st our Safety Committee will be going through its recertification process.

We received notice from PennDOT that we will be receiving \$17.36 cents in addition to our normal reimbursement for snow/ice removal due to the harsh winter we had.

We will be meeting with our Redevelopment Authority to discuss our priorities for the use of our 2016 CDBG monies, and will continue allocating portions of these funds for demolition of blighted properties.

President's Report

Mrs. Miller thanked Ms. Enos for the good job, and Mr. Svirsko for the handicap spot at Cascio's.

She asked the Chief about a suggestion to have a policeman to direct traffic parking during parades. Chief Cox said he will have a follow-up meeting with Laurel Arts, for other questions.

Regarding parking meter update, Ms. Enos said the City of Pittsburgh is looking to sell their old equipment – digital timers, cabinet, and we have a limited amount in our budget for meter replacements.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to accept the offer from the City of Pittsburgh for the purchase of parking meters. Motion was seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Unanimously Carried.

Mrs. Miller said we need to look at working on our ordinances to update them as time permits.

She mentioned the need to collect limbs on Uhl Street.

Concerning the Diamond, Mrs. Enos they are looking at the best way to remove the stumps without ruining the structure since it has grown into the planters and underneath the sidewalks.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reported the following:

The sewer plant lagoon punch list item is completed and this project is ready to be closed out.

Our architects performed a field view of the Public Works Building, with no major issues. The office space locations could use some restructuring for more efficiency, to be planned for in the future. Part of the recommendation is to do something with the garage doors. Ms. Enos said we will get estimates. Chief Cox described the door and suggested having them all match, plus they need to be very sturdy.

Public Works Committee

Mr. Thomas mentioned things he noticed uptown – curbing was put in; paving and digging up for the new gas line.

Mr. Rosemeyer said he received a call from a resident regarding trash near Berkey Lane. Heavy rains are causing it to wash down to other properties. He suggested having two dumpsters, one for each building.

Mr. Svirsko reported the following:

Public Works crews have been replacing fire hydrants and cleaning sanitary lines throughout the Borough.

Our crack sealer was returned – we got two free weeks coming up later on in the year since we couldn't use it every day because of the weather.

Planters on the four corners of the Diamond are being watched to see how the stumps come out. They are doing trash pickup, grass cutting, brush hauling, pothole patching every day.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer said he met with the Chief, Mayor and Mr. Thomas. They discussed how vacant positions affect overtime.

This Thursday he will attend PSAB and he asked for any items to bring up. He said he voted against the issue of radar, which is coming up soon.

Officer Greg Hall will be sent a thank-you letter and he is pleased about the fact that at half-way through the year we are under budget.

Finance Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer reported the following:

With 50% of the year completed, our “mid- year” review is as follows:

General Fund

Revenues: 63.81%

Expenses: 48.07%

Water Revenue Fund

Revenues: 63.34 %

Expenses: 55.55%

Sewer Fund

Revenues: 76.49%

Expenses: 60.53%

Somerset, Inc.

Mrs. Pyle reported the following:

Update on the renovations to Trinity Park. Work is expected to begin on September 1st pending approval from DCNR.

“Dinner in the Park” turned out well.

The Kimberly Hindman Building, located behind the Post Office is being considered for a Bed and Breakfast.

The “World’s Attic” has moved to the Christian Bookstore – executive offices are being kept on the second floor.

Bedford Borough is doing great as a Main Street Program. We have decided to go to Bedford to see if we can learn anything from them. We went with Ken Halverson, Hank Parke and Angelitto to meet with their Main Street personnel.

A “sporting clays” event is coming up, and it is always a big fund raiser.

Somerset Volunteer Fire Department

Gary Thomas reported increased calls to the Fire Department and they are always searching for volunteers.

The new ladder truck should be here in the spring.

They are having a golf tournament on September 18th at the Country Club to help with the cost, and we are hoping to generate between 9 and 10 thousand dollars’ profit.

Solicitor’s Report

We had four dog zoning violations – three by Mr. Jury and one by the Police Department. The cases were withdrawn. They may seek a variance, which goes to the Zoning Hearing Board. Under our Zoning Ordinance procedures, a variance goes to our Zoning Hearing Board and Council can be a party to the proceeding

The lagoon matter is pending, and it is still not moving anywhere, with the Common Pleas Court.

He said they looked into the Scout Building matter. We went as far as possible with our local record examination and did not find much. He said he provided counsel from Johnstown with his findings, and has not heard from them.

Mr. Rosemeyer had a question concerning the Department of Transportation approving 85 foot length trucks. It was explained that when the turnpike closes down at either end, we can barely handle the large truck traffic coming through our community. A letter from the Borough, if approved, could be sent, stating that we are against the enlargement of trucks to 85 feet, a major concern weight – wise also. The Local Emergency Planning Committee also has a concern.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mrs. Ream, to have Mrs. Enos write a letter to PSAB regarding the danger of large trucks on the Turnpike coming through town.

Unanimously Carried.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Walker reminded all of the upcoming "National Night Out" and encouraged attendance.

He spoke on the training status of the police dog.

Adjournment

Mr. Shaulis moved to adjourn – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.
8:16 p.m.

Michele Enos,
Interim Borough Manager